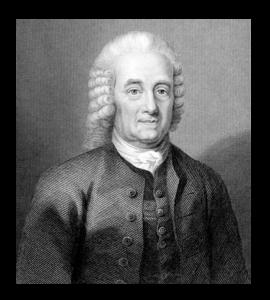
# Swedenborg in Late 19<sup>th</sup> and Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century Context



Linda Dalrymple Henderson
The University of Texas at Austin

Arthur Dove, *Nature Symbolized, No.* 2, c. 1911

Wassily Kandinsky, Composition VI, 1913



Max Weber to Arthur Dove while painting together: "It isn't what you see there; you must always symbolize things."

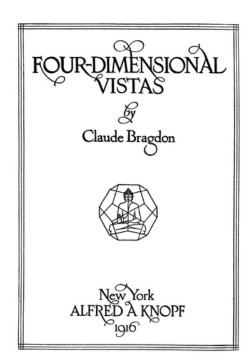


### Wassily Kandinsky, Composition VI, 1913



Max Weber, *Interior of the* Fourth Dimension, 1913



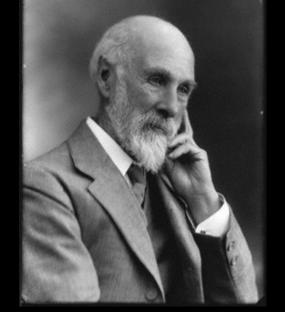




#### SWEDENBORG: THE SAVANT AND THE SEER.\*

SWEDEN held a commanding position in the civilised world when Emanuel Swedenborg was born in January, 1688. During the forty years' rule of Gustavus Vasa, in the sixteenth century, Sweden first awoke to a national life, and under his grandson, Gustavus Adolphus—the hero of the Thirty Years' War, and one of the most enlightened monarchs that ever wore a crown—Sweden rose to be one of the greatest powers in Europe; a position she held for nearly a century. Moreover, Sweden was the champion of intellectual freedom, of civil and religious liberty, as shown from the fact that such learned heretics as Descartes, Grotius, and others were welcomed at the Court of Queen Christina. Nor can science forget the debt she owes to those famous Swedes, Rudbeck, Linnæus, Celsius, Berzelius, and others in the past, and in recent years to Angström, Retzius, Nordenskiöld, Sven Hedin, Arrhenius, and many others.

1912



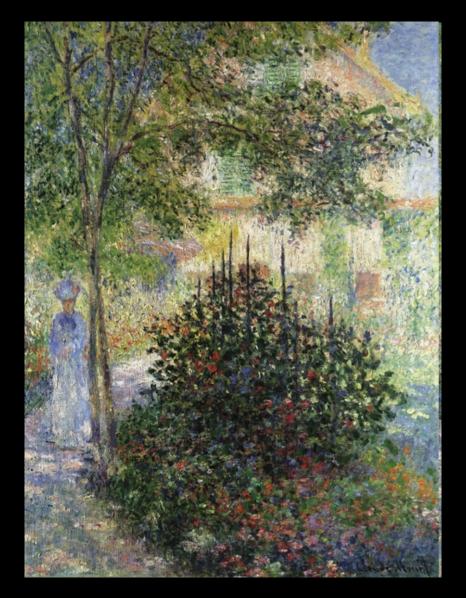
Sir William Fletcher Barrett

#### G.-Albert Aurier, from "Symbolism in Painting: Paul Gauguin," 1891\*

It is evident—it is almost trite to state it—, that there exists in the history of art two great contradictory tendencies, of which, unquestionably, the one depends on blindness and the other on the clairvoyance of that inner eye of man on which Swedenborg speaks. They are the realist trend and the ideistic trend. (I do not say idealistic; we'll see why.)<sup>1</sup>

Without a doubt, realistic art—that is, art of which the one and only aim is the representation of material externals, the sensory appearances—constitutes an interesting aesthetic manifestation. It shows the worker's soul in a certain way, as in a reflection, as it shows us the deformations that the object has undergone in going through it. Indeed, no one challenges the fact that realism, even if it has been a pretext for numerous abominations, as impersonal and banal as photographs, has often produced incontestable masterpieces, resplendent in the museum of our memories. But yet, it is not less unchallengable for anyone willing to reflect truthfully, that ideistic art appears to be more pure and more elevated—more pure and more elevated through the complete purity and the complete elevatedness that separates matter from idea. We can even affirm that the supreme art cannot but be ideistic, art by definition (as we know intuitively) being the representative materialization of what is the highest and the most truly divine in the world, of what is, in the last analysis, the only thing existent—the Idea. Therefore, those who do not know about the Idea, nor are able to see it, nor believe in it, merit our compassion, just as those poor stupid prisoners of the allegorical cavern of Plato did for free men.

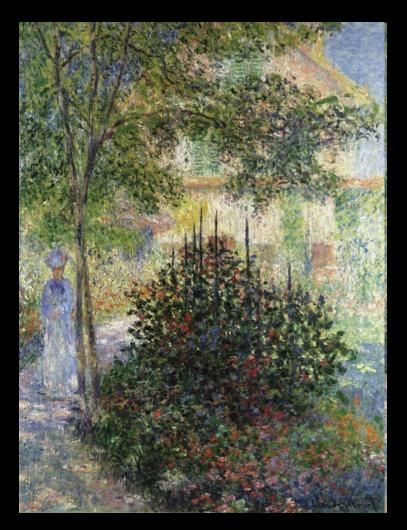
#### Originally published in Mercure de France, 1891



Monet, Mme. Monet in the Garden in Argenteuil, 1876



Dove, *Nature Symbolized, No. 2*, c. 1911





Paul Gauguin, Vision After the Sermon, 1888

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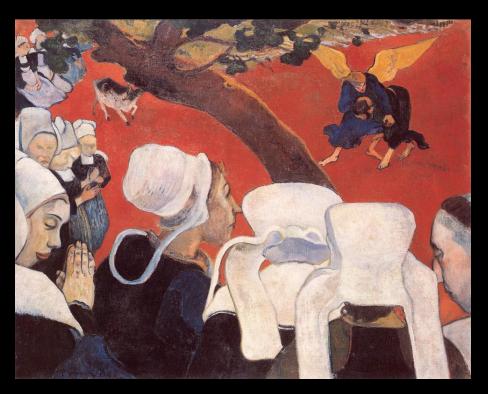


Indeed, in the eyes of the artist—that is, the one who must be the Expresser of Absolute Beings—objects are only relative beings, which are nothing but a translation proportionate to the relativity of our intellects, of Ideas, of absolute and essential beings. Objects cannot have value more than objects as such. They can appear to him only as signs. They are the letters of an enormous alphabet which only the man of genius knows how to spell.<sup>3</sup>

To write his thought, his poem, with these signs, realizing that the sign, even if it is indispensable, is nothing in itself and that the idea alone is everything, seems to be the task of the artist whose eye is able to distinguish essences from tangible objects. The first consequence of this principle, too evident to justify pause, is a necessary simplification in the vocabulary of the sign. If this were not true, would not the painter then in fact resemble the naïve writer who believed he was adding something to his work by refining and ornamenting his handwriting with useless curls?



Paul Gauguin, Vision After The Sermon: Jacob Wrestling the Angel, 1888



Gauguin, *Vision After the Sermon,* 1888

Ando Hiroshige, 100 Views of Edo, 1857 (Japanese print)



### "Correspondences" (1857) by Charles Baudelaire

Nature is a temple where living pillars
Let escape sometimes confused words;
Man traverses it through forests of symbols
That observe him with familiar glances.

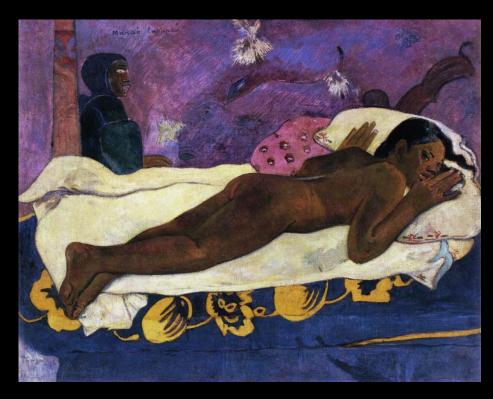
Like long echoes that intermingle from afar
In a dark and profound unity,
Vast like the night and like the light,
The perfumes, the colors and the sounds answer each other.

There are perfumes fresh like the skin of infants Sweet like oboes, green like meadows,

—And others corrupted, rich and triumphant

That have the expanse of infinite things, Like amber, musk, balsam and incense, Which sing the ecstasies of the mind and senses.





Gauguin, Spirit of the Dead Watching 1892



Dove, Nature Symbolized, No. 2, c. 1911



Gauguin, *Vision After the Sermon*, 1888



Dove, *Nature Symbolized, No. 2*, c. 1911



Wassily Kandinsky, Composition VI, 1913

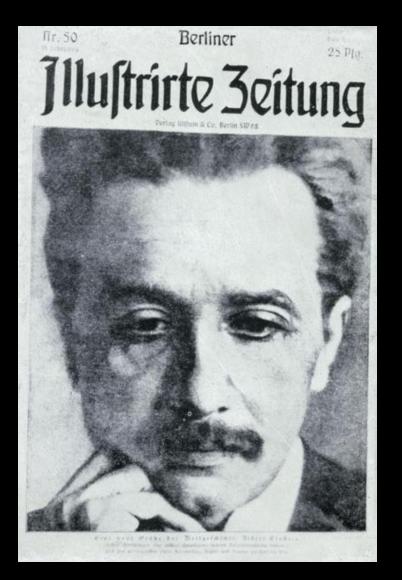




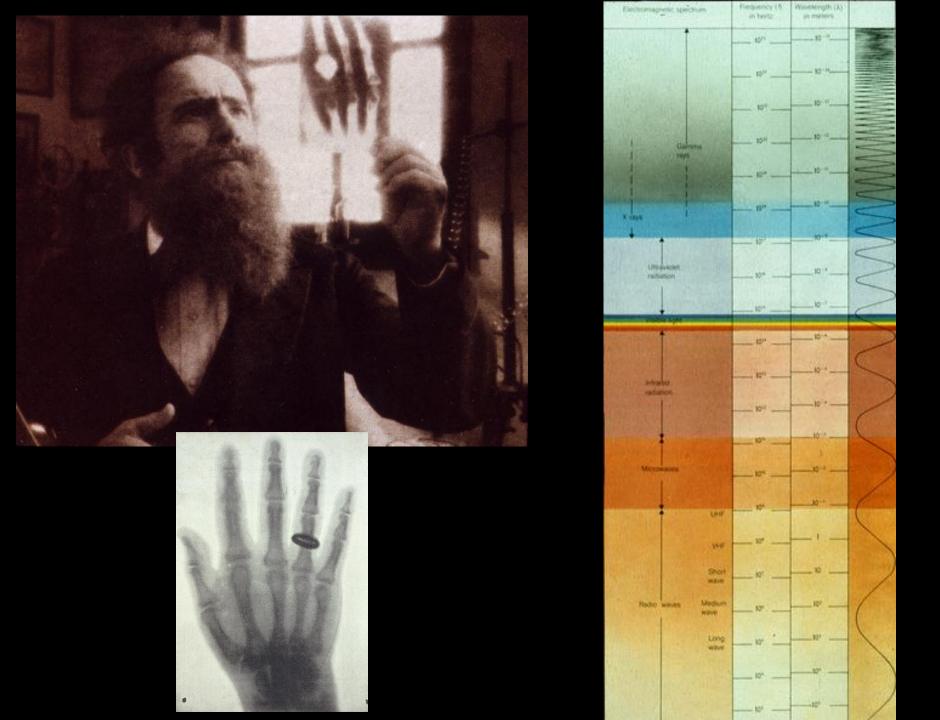
# FOUR-DIMENSIONAL VISTAS Ey Claude Bragdon

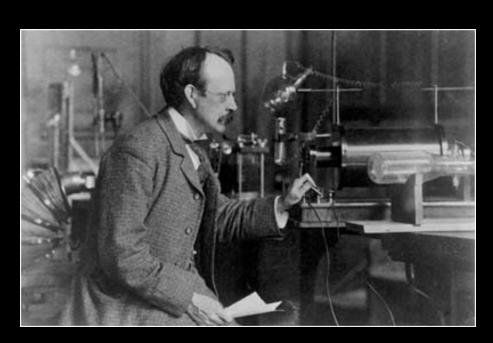


New York
ALFRED A KNOPF
1916

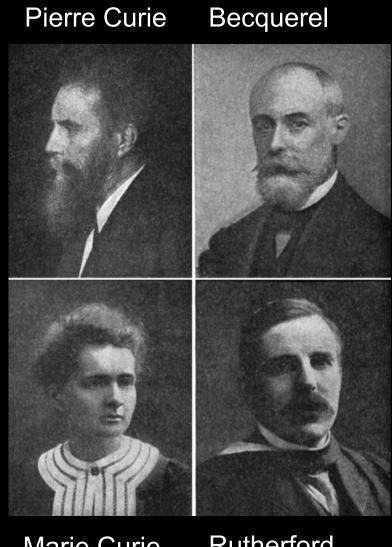


November 1919





J. J. Thomson



Marie Curie

Rutherford

### Roentgen





### Rutherford

Becquerel

Curie

Bibliothèque de Philosophie scientifique

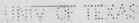
D' GUSTAVE LE BON

### L'Évolution de la Matière

- Rien ne se crée. Tout se perd.

- C'est de l'énergie intra-atomique libérée par la dématérialisation de la matière que dérivent la plupart des forces de l'univers.

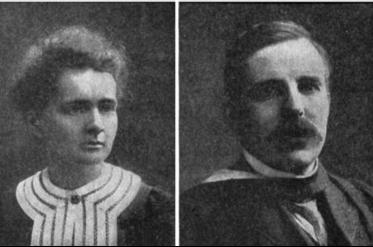
Avec 62 figures .... photographiees au laboratoire de l'auteur.



#### PARIS

ERNEST FLAMMARION, EDITEUR 26, RUE RACINE, 26

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THE ETHER OF SPACE

#### SIR OLIVER LODGE, F.R.S.

D.Sc. Loud, Hon. D.Sc. Oxon, et Viet.
L.L.D. St. Andrew's, Glasgow, and Aberdeen
Vice-President of the Institution of Electrical Engineers
Rumford Medallist of the Royal Society
Ex-President of the Physical Society of London
Late Prefessor of Physics in the University College of Liverpool
Homorary Member of the American Philosophical Society of Philadelphia;
of the Manchester Philosophical Society; of the Batwish
Society of Rotterdam; and of the Academy of Sciences of Bologua

Principal of the University of Birmingham

ILLUSTRATED

NEW YORK AND LONDON HARPER & BROTHERS 1909

## THE ETHER OF SPACE

BY

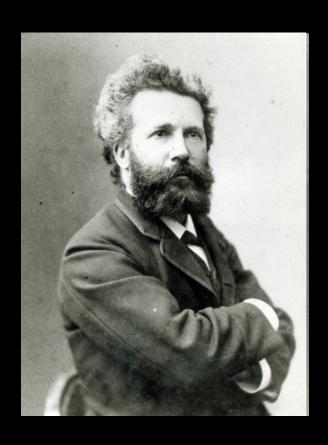
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ILLUSTRATED

NEW YORK AND LONDON HARPER & BROTHERS



#### CAMILLE FLAMMARION

### L'Inconnu

ET 1.88

Problèmes psychiques

MARITONEATIONS DE MODERNIE APPARITONNY, TÉLÉPATRIE GAMMENTOATHONE PARCOQUER REMEDITION MERTALE TOE A GISTASCE LE RUSDE DE RÉVRE LA DIVINATION DE L'AVESTR

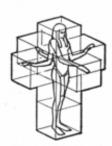
#### PARIS

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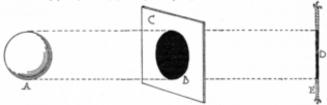
\$6, see eacles, rate gleater

### A:PRIMER:OF HIGHER:SPACE (THE:FOURTH:DIMENSION)

Claude Bragdon



1913: THE: MANAS: PRESS ROCHESTER: NEW: YORK THE REPRESENTATION OF THE FORM OF AN OBJECT IS CONDITIONED AND RESTRICTED BY THE SPACE IN WHICH SUCH REPRESENTATION OCCURS. THE HIGHER THE SPACE THE MORE COMPLETE THE REPRESENTATION



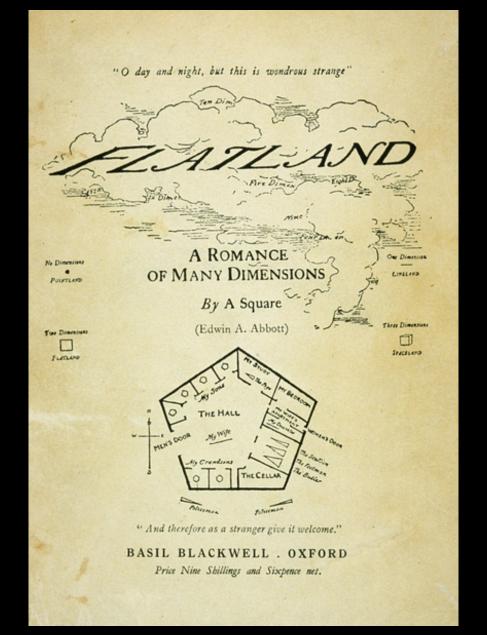
FOR EXAMPLE, THE SPHERE (A 3-STACE FORM) CAN ONLY BE REPRESENTED IN PLANE, SPACE BY A CIRCLE OF A DIAMETER FOUNDAIL, TO THE DIAMETER OF THE SPHERE, AND IN LINEAR SPACE BY A LINE OF A LENGTH EQUAL TO THE SAID DIAMETER.

THEST LOWER-DIMENSIONAL REPRESENTATIONS MAY BE CONCEIVED OF AS THE SHADOWS CAST BY HIGHER-SPACE

FORMS ON LOWER SPACE WORLDS

THE SPHERE A CASTS THE CIRCULAR SHADOW DUPON THE PLANE C. AND THE LINEAR SHADOW DUPON THE LINE E. OF WHAT, THEN, IS THE SPHERE ITSELF IN THIS SENSE, THE SHADOW? THE HYPERSPHERE RELATED TO THE SPHERE AS IT IS RELATED TO ITS CIRCLE OF GREATEST. DEAMETER.





THE GENERATION OF CORRESPONDING FIGURES IN ONE - TWO-, THREE - AND FOUR-SPACE F14.1. THE LINE: A 1-SPACE FIGURE GENERATED BY THE MOVEMENT OF A POINT, CONTAIN-ING AN INFINITE NUMBER OF POINTS, AND 2 FORM ITS' BOUNDARIES' FIG.2. THE JOUARE: A 2-SPACE FIGURE GENERA-TED BY THE MOVEMENT OF A LINE IN A DIRECTION PERPENDICULAR TO ITSELF TO

LINES, AND IS BOUNDED BY 4 LINES AND 4 POINTS: TIG.3

THE CUBE: A 3-SPACE FIGURE OR SOLID." GENERATED BY THE MOVEMENT OF A SOUARE, IN A DIRECTION PERPENDICULAR TO IT'S OWN PLANE, TO A DISTANCE EQUAL TO THE LENGTH OF THE SQUARE THE CUBE CONTAINS AN INFINITE NUM

A DISTANCE EQUAL TO ITS OWN LENGTH IT CONTAINS AN INFINITE NUMBER OF

BER OF PLANES (SOUARES) AND IS BOUNDED BY 6 SURFACES 12 LINES AND 8 POINTS



THE TESSERACT, OR TETRA-HYPERCUBE: A4-SPACE FIGURE GENERATED BY THE MOVEMENT OF A CUBE IN THE DIRECTION (TO US UNIMAGINABLE) OF THE 4TH DI-MENSION. THIS MOVEMENT IS EXTENDED TO A DISTANCE EQUAL TO ONE EDGE OF THE CUBE AND ITS DIRECTION IS PERFEN DICULAR TO ALL OUR 3 DIMENSIONS AS EACH OF THESE'S IS PERPENDICULAR, TO THE OTHERS. THE TESSERACT CONTAINS AN INFINITE NUMBER OF FINITE 3-SPACE (CUBES) AND IS BOUNDED BY 8 CUBES, 24 SOUARES: 32 LINES AND 16 POINTS.



NOTE: FIGURE 4 IS A SYMBOLIC REPRESENTATION ONLY—A SORT OF DIAGRAM - SUCCESTING SOME RELATIONS WE CAN PREDICATE OF THE TESSERACT. FIGURE'S IS A REPRESENTATION DRAWN ON A DIFFERENT PRINCIPLE IN ORDER TO BRING OUT A DIFFERENT SET OF RELATIONS.

THE PROJECTIONS MADE BY A CUBE IN TRAVERSING A PLANE A REPRESENT THE SERIES OF CROSS-SECTIONS TRACED BY THE CUBE IN ENTERING THE PLANE VERTICALLY BY ONE OF ITS ANGLES 'B' REPRESENTS THE SERIES RESULTANT ON ITS ENTERING BY ONE OF ITS EDGES "C" REPRESENTS THE UNCHANGING CROSS-SECTION TRACED BY THE CUBE MEETINGTHE PLANE SOUARE LY BY ONE OF ITS SIDES ALL POSSIBLE PROJECT TIONS ARE MODIFICA-THE CUBES IN THE ABOVE TIONS OF THESE 3 CLASES DIAGRAM, SYMMETRICAL SOLIDS OF A 3-DIMENSION-AL SPACE, TRACE VARIOUS EPHEMERAL AND CHANGING CROSS SECTIONS IN THE PLANE D. A 2-SPACE, THE CHARACTER OF THE CROSS-SECTION BEING DETERMINED BY THE ANGLE AT WHICH THE CUBE MEETS THE PLANE - IF THE CUBES BE TAKEN TO REPRESENT THE HIGHER SELVES OF INDIVIDUALS IN A HIGHER-SPACE WORLD, THE PLANE OUR PHENOMENAL WORLD. THE CROSS-SECTIONS WOULD THEN REPRESENT THE LOWER SPACE-ASPECTS OF THESE HIGHER SELVES - PERSONALITIES

PLATE 30





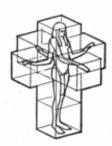
Weber, Interior of the Fourth Dimension, 1913

Picasso, *Ambroise Vollard*, 1909-10

### A:PRIMER:OF HIGHER:SPACE

(THE: FOURTH: DIMENSION)

Claude Bragdon



1913: THE: MANAS: PRESS ROCHESTERS: NEW: YORK

# FOUR-DIMENSIONAL VISTAS





New York ALFRED A KNOPF 1916

#### FOUR-DIMENSIONAL VISTAS

#### SWEDENBORG

Emerson, in his Representative Men, chose Swedenborg as the representative mystic. He accepted Swedenborg's way of looking at the world as universally characteristic of the mystical temperament. The Higher Space Theory was unheard of in Swedenborg's day, nevertheless in his religious writings—thick clouds shot with lightning—the idea is implicit and sometimes even expressed, though in a terminology all his own.

To Swedenborg's vision, as to Plato's, this physical world is a world of ultimates, in all things correspondent to the casual world, which he names "heaven." "It is to be observed," he says, "that the natural world exists and subsists from the spiritual world, just as an effect exists from its efficient cause."

According to Swedenborg, conditions in "heaven" are different from those in the world: space is different: distance is different. He says, "Space in heaven is not like space in the world, for space in the world is fixed, and therefore measurable: but in heaven it is not fixed and therefore cannot be measured."

Herein is suggested a *fluidic* condition, singularly in accord with certain modern conceptions in theoretical physics. Commenting upon the significance of Lobatchewsky's and Bolyai's work along the lines of non-Euclidian geometry, Hinton says, "By immersing the conception of distance in matter, to which it properly belongs, it promises to be of the greatest aid in analysis, for the effective distance of any two particles is the result of complex material

106

# FOUR-DIMENSIONAL VISTAS

Ey Claude Bragdon



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TO6

#### THE WITHIN AND WITHOUT

In Swedenborg's heaven "all communicate by the extension of the sphere which goes forth from the life of every one. The sphere of their life is the sphere of their affections of love and hate."

This is as fair a description of thought transference and its necessary condition as could well be devised, for as in wireless telegraphy, its mechanical counterpart, it depends upon synchronism of vibration in a "sphere which goes forth from the life of every one." Thought transference and kindred phenomena in which all categories of space and time lose their significance baffle our understanding because they appear to involve the idea of being in two places —in many places—at once, a thing manifestly at variance with our own conscious experience. It is as though the pen point should suddenly become the sheet of paper. But strange as are these matters and mysterious as are their method, no other hypothesis so well explains them as that they are higher-dimensional experiences of the self. We have the universal testimony of all mystics that the attainment of mystical consciousness is by inward contemplation—turning the mind back upon itself. Swedenborg says, "It can in no case be said that heaven is outside of any one, but it is within him for every angel participates in the heaven around him by virtue of the heaven which is within him." Christ said, "The Kingdom of Heaven is within you," and there is a saving attributed to Him to the effect that "When the outside becomes the inside, then the Kingdom of Heaven is come." These and such arcane sayings as "Know

#### THE MYSTICS

Thyself," engraved upon the lintels of ancient temples of initiation, powerfully suggest the possibility that by penetrating to the center of our individual consciousness we expand outwardly into the cosmic consciousness as though in and out were the positive and negative of a new dimension. By exerting a force in the negative direction upon a slender column of water in a hydraulic press, it is possible to raise in the positive direction a vast bulk of water with which that column, through the mechanism of the press, is connected. This is because both columns, the little and the big, enclose one body of fluid. The attainment of higher states of consciousness is potential in every one, for the reason that the consciousness of a greater being flows through each individual.

### Cosmic Consciousness

A Study in the Evolution of the Human Mind

By

#### RICHARD MAURICE BUCKE, M.D.

FORMERLY MEDICAL SUPERINTENDENT OF THE ASYLUM FOR THE INSANE, LONDON, CANADA

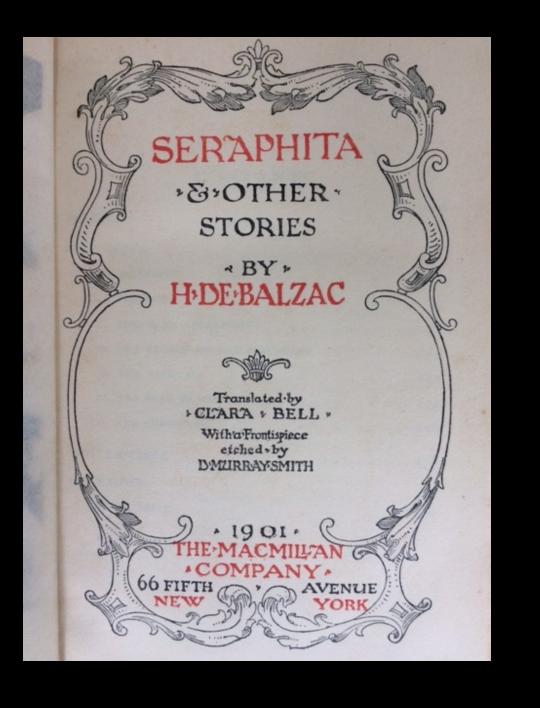
NEW INTRODUCTION BY GEORGE MOREBY ACKLOM



NEW YORK

E. P. DUTTON AND COMPANY, INC.

PUBLISHERS



consists in the possibility and virtue of varying themselves, or of changing states, which possibility increases with their elevations, so that in number it exceeds all the series of calculations unfolded by human minds, and still inwardly involved by them: which infinities finally become what is finite in the Supreme. Our ideas are merely progressions by variations of form, and thus by actual changes of state."

His sense of the beauty and orderliness of the whole process, and his despair of communicating it, find characteristic utterance in the following passage:

"If thou could'st discern, my beloved, how distinctly and ordinately these forms are arranged and connected with each other, from the mere aspect and infinity of so many wonderful things connected with each other, from the mere aspect and infinity of so many wonderful things conspiring into one, thou would'st fall down, from an inmost impulse, with sacred astonishment, and at the same time pious joy, to perform an act of worship and of love before such an architect."

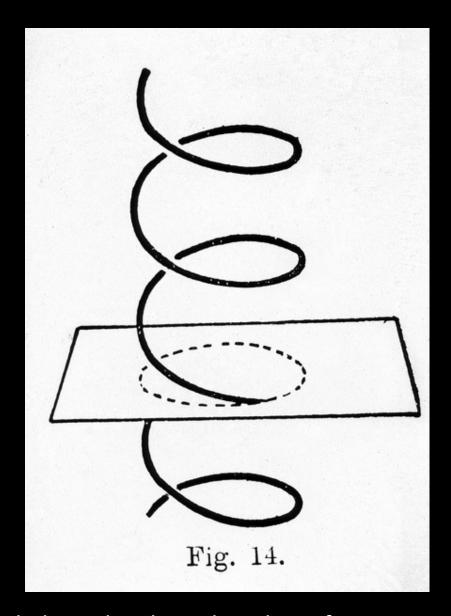
In his description of the manner in which these forms cohere and successively unfold, he introduces one of the basic concepts of higher space thought; namely, that in the "descent of forms" from space to space, that which in the higher exists all together—that is, simultaneously—can only manifest itself in

the lower piecemeal-that is, successively. He

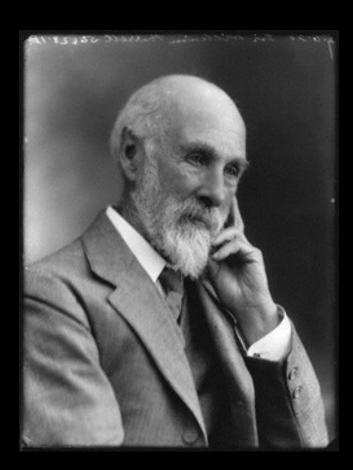
says:

"Nothing is together in any texture or effect which was not successively introduced; and everything is therein, according as order itself introduces it: wherefore simultaneous order derives its birth, nature and perfection from successive orders, and the former is only rendered perspicuous and plain by the latter. . . . What is supreme in things successive takes the inmost place in things simultaneous: thus things superior in order super-involve things inferior and wrap them together, that these latter may become exterior in the same order: by this method first principles, which are also called simple, unfold themselves, and involve themselves in things posterior or compound: wherefore every perfection of what is outermost flows forth from inmost principles by their series: hence thy beauty, my daughter, the only parent of which is order itself."

This passage, like a proffered dish full of rare fruit, tempts the metaphysical appetite by the wealth and variety of its appeal; but not to weary the reader, the author will content himself by the abstraction of a single plum. The plum in question is simply this (and the reader is asked to read the quotation carefully again): may not every act, incident, circumstance in a human life be the "uncoiling" of a karmic aggregate? This coil of life may be thought of most conveniently in this connection as



Spiral passing through a plane, from Charles H. Hinton, *The Fourth Dimension*, 1904



Sir William Fletcher Barrett (1844-1925)

#### THE PRINCIPIA

OB

THE FIRST PRINCIPLES OF NATURAL THINGS

TO WHICH ARE ADDED

#### THE MINOR PRINCIPIA

AND SUMMARY OF THE PRINCIPIA

nv

EMANUEL SWEDENBORG

TRANSLATED FROM THE LATIN BY
JAMES R. RENDELL, B.A., AND
ISAIAH TANSLEY, B.A.

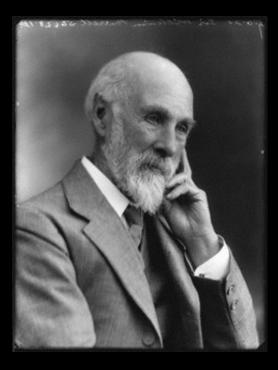
WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY ISAIAH TANSLEY, B.A.

AND A FOREWORD BY
PROFESSOR SIR WILLIAM F. BARRETT, F.R.S.

VOLUME I.

SWEDENBORG SOCIETY (Inc.),

20, HART STREET, LONDON, W.C.1.



SWEDENBORG: THE SAVANT AND THE SEER.\*

SWEDEN held a commanding position in the civilised world when Emanuel Swedenborg was born in January, 1688. During the forty years' rule of Gustavus Vasa, in the sixteenth century, Sweden first awoke to a national life, and under his grandson, Gustavus Adolphus—the hero of the Thirty Years' War, and one of the most enlightened monarchs that ever wore a crown—Sweden rose to be one of the greatest powers in Europe; a position she held for nearly a century. Moreover, Sweden was the champion of intellectual freedom, of civil and religious liberty, as shown from the fact that such learned heretics as Descartes, Grotius, and others were welcomed at the Court of Queen Christina. Nor can science forget the debt she owes to those famous Swedes, Rudbeck, Linnæus, Celsius, Berzelius, and others in the past, and in recent years to Angström, Retzius, Nordenskiöld, Sven Hedin, Arrhenius, and many others.

## Contemporary Review, July 1912

## THE PRINCIPIA

OR

THE FIRST PRINCIPLES OF NATURAL THINGS

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20, HART STREET, LONDON, W.C.1.

#### SWEDENBORG: THE SAVANT AND THE SEER.\*

SWEDEN held a commanding position in the civilised world when Emanuel Swedenborg was born in January, 1688. During the forty years' rule of Gustavus Vasa, in the sixteenth century, Sweden first awoke to a national life, and under his grandson, Gustavus Adolphus—the hero of the Thirty Years' War, and one of the most enlightened monarchs that ever wore a crown—Sweden rose to be one of the greatest powers in Europe; a position she held for nearly a century. Moreover, Sweden was the champion of intellectual freedom, of civil and religious liberty, as shown from the fact that such learned heretics as Descartes, Grotius, and others were welcomed at the Court of Queen Christina. Nor can science forget the debt she owes to those famous Swedes, Rudbeck, Linnæus, Celsius, Berzelius, and others in the past, and in recent years to Angström, Retzius, Nordenskiöld, Sven Hedin, Arrhenius, and many others.

## Contemporary Review, July 1912



#### THE SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE OF NATURE.

Though his training in the natural sciences during the first fifty years of his life had, as Swedenborg affirms, prepared him for the period of seership, yet from the time of his spiritual quickening onwards, he gave up active scientific investigation, and retired from his post as Assessor of the Board of Mines, in order to devote himself to the higher mission to which he believed he had been called.

But unlike most mystics he carries into all his writings of this second period the calm, unimpassioned air of science. He is always serene and confident, and knows no wavering in the Divine vocation which he claims has been conferred upon him. For nearly thirty years he asserts he held daily converse with angels and with many of the departed spirits from earth. He tells us that he recounts what he has actually seen and heard, not mere imagination or ecstasy. Yet we find the clear-sighted philosopher and savant co-existing with the mystic, to whom the spiritual world seemed more real and open to view than the world of sense and outward things.

To the superficial view of most men he had become mad; to the psychologist the visions and voices were hallucinations, a secondary self or an alternating personality. Nevertheless Mr. F. W. H. Myers says in his great work on Human Personality that this period of Swedenborg's life—" one of the strangest lives yet lived "by mortal men—is corroborative rather than destructive of the slowly rising fabric of knowledge, of which he was the uniquely gifted precursor." By this Mr. Myers means that the results of modern critical investigation in psychical research, and the glimpses apparently afforded of the state of life after death, certainly confirm the long prior statements made by Swedenborg. That Swedenborg exhibited, from time to time, supernormal knowledge of earthly things, appears absolutely incontestable. The best known are the cases which the philosopher Kant investigated soon

VOL. CII.



Kandinsky, Composition VI, 1913





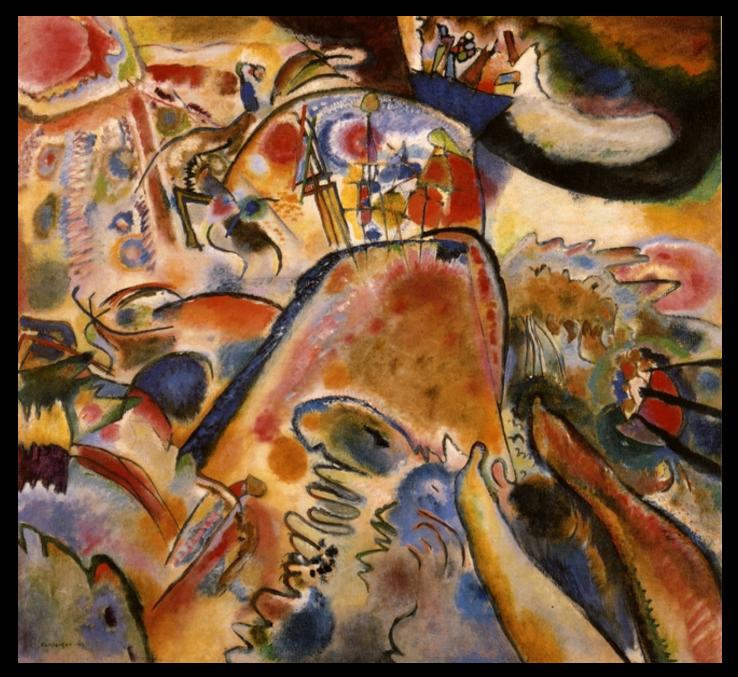




Kandinsky, Small Pleasures, 1913



Kandinsky, Sound of Trumpets, 1911



Kandinsky, Small Pleasures, 1913







Kandinsky, Impression: Concert, 1911



Kandinsky, Composition VI, 1913



Kandinsky, *Lady in Moscow*, 1912

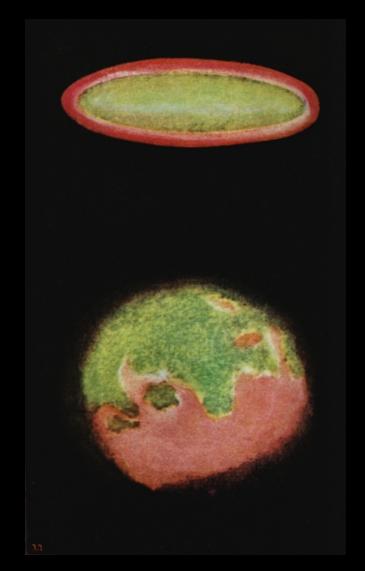
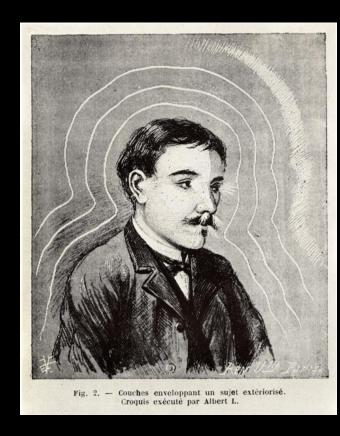


Plate from Besant and Leadbeater, *Thought Forms* (1905)

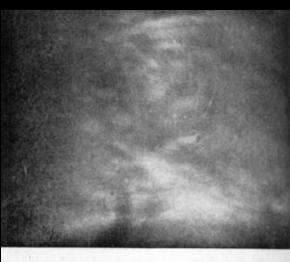


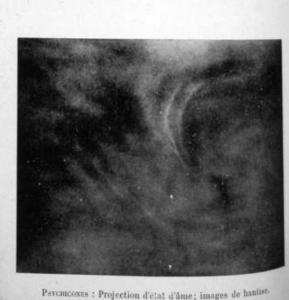
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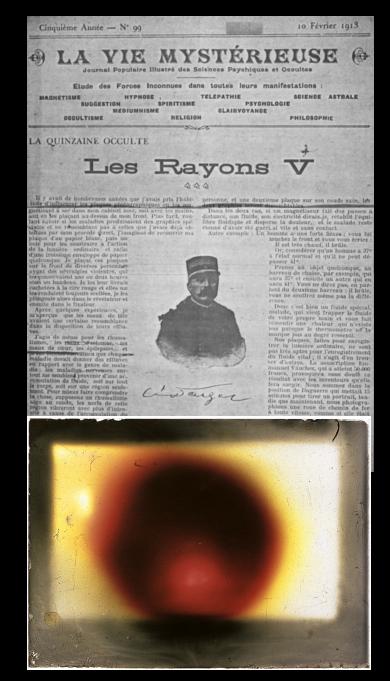


From Albert de Rochas L'Extériorisation de la sensibilité (1895)





Baraduc, "Psychicone," From *L'Ame humaine* (1896)



Commandant Louis Darget photograph of "fluids"



# "Die Uebersinnliche Welt."

Monatsschrift für okkultistische Forschung.

Organ der

Wissenschaftlichen Vereinigung Sphinx in Berlin,

Berliner Gesellschaft für psychische Forschung

Gesellschaft für wissenschaftliche Psychologie in München

und des

Alten Ordens der Mystiker.

## XVIII. Jahrgang. - 1910.

Berausg. u. Verleger A. Meinholt, Berlin C. 25, Dirckfenstr. 108. Verantwortl. Redakteur Max Rahn, Borgsdorf a. d. Hordbahn (Wark) Straße H.

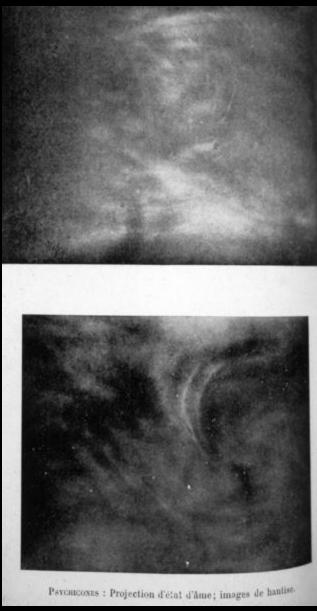
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Composition VI, 1913



From Hippolyte Baraduc, L'Ame humaine (1896)



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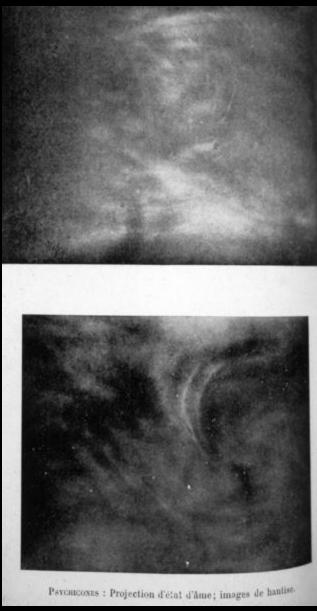




From Albert de Rochas L'Extériorisation de la sensibilité (1895)



Composition VI, 1913



From Hippolyte Baraduc, L'Ame humaine (1896)





Kandinsky, Composition VII, 1913





Steiner



Kandinsky, Composition VII, 1913





Kandinsky, Composition VII, 1913











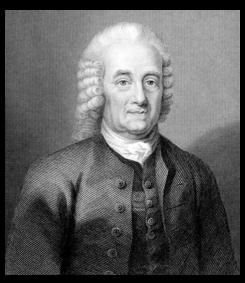
Kandinsky, Composition VII, 1913



Dove



Kandinsky



Weber

#### SWEDENBORG AS A SCIENTIFIC MAN.

From his earliest years Swedenborg was an eager and profound student. He diligently strove to master every branch of knowledge, not merely by book work, but by practical investigation. It was as rare then, as now, to find a man combining the gift of classical scholarship, and of abstruse philosophical speculation, with an eminently practical and inventive genius. Yet this was the case with Swedenborg. Not only did he make himself acquainted with various skilled handicrafts, but he projected several novel and useful inventions, including a flying machine, a submarine war vessel, a quick-firing gun, a mercurial air pump, and other inventions of recent times. His mechanical genius is better remembered by his successful transportation of war galleys for seventeen miles overland, during the attack on the fortress of Frederickshall. He threw himself with ardour into mathematics, issued a mathematical journal, published in ten books the first Swedish treatise on algebra, and was offered, but declined, the chair of mathematics in his University. Then he began to study nature. Professor Nordenskiöld, in an address to the Swedish Academy of Sciences, tells us that the merit of having first made the fluctuation of the ocean level the subject of scientific investigation belongs to Swedenborg. Geology and palæontology were sciences that did not then exist; rocks, minerals, and fossils were believed to have been created in situ, or accounted for by the Noachian deluge. Swedenborg, though at first accepting the current view, soon realised its absurdity, and urged that mineral veins were probably deposited from solutions which penetrated the fissures of the rocks, and that fossil flora were ancient plants and ferns embedded in a clay matrix: in fact, a genus of fossil plants has been named after him "Swedenborgia." \*